

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ASAD SPEECH ON SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF OCTOBER 1973 WAR

1. SUMMARY: IN OCTOBER 6 SPEECH MARKING SECOND ANNIVERSARY OCT. WAR, PRESIDENT ASAD STATED THAT FURTHER DISENGAGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL COULD ONLY TAKE PLACE IF THEY BEGAN ON SYRIAN AND PALESTINIAN FRONTS AT SAME TIME. PALESTINIAN TALKS MUST BE WITH PLO NOT JORDAN OR SYRIA. AGAINST BACKDROP OF PRAISE FOR EGYPTIAN PEOPLE AND ARMY, ASAD DISPUTED SADAT'S FOCUS ON 1973 CEASEFIRE, SOVIET MENACE, ETC., AND INSTEAD CALLED UPON EGYPTIANS AND ALL ARABS TO CONCENTRATE ON CONTENT OF LATEST SINAI AGREEMENT. HE ROUNDLY CRITICIZED AGREEMENT ON GROUNDS IT DEVIATED FROM ARAB

SOLIDARITY AND ARAB SUMMIT RESOLUTIONS, PERMITTED PASSAGE OF
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ISRAELI CARGOES THROUGH CANAL WHILE ISRAEL STILL OCCUPIED NINETY

PERCENT OF CAPTURED ARAB TERRITORY, LIMITED MEANS OF SETTling
DISPUTE TO PEACEFUL PROCESS ONLY, WAS UNLIMITED IN ITS PERIOD OF
VALIDITY, INTRODUCED AMERICAN PERSONNEL BETWEEN EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI
ARMIES WHICH EGYPT ALONE COULD NOT REMOVE, AND CONTAINED SECRET
CLAUSES DENIED BY SADAT AND REVEALED BY AMERICANS WHICH EMBODIED
GREAT DISASTER TO ARABS. SPEECH CONSTITUTES COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT
OF CURRENT SYRIAN POSITION TOWARD SINAI AGREEMENT AND TOWARD
FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL. END SUMMARY.

2. PRES. ASAD'S TELEVISED SPEECH TO GOVERNMENT CADRES AT DAMASCUS
UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM WAS KEYNOTE OF SYRIA'S CELEBRATION OF
SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF OCTOBER WAR, DAY IN WHICH MIG OVERFLIGHTS,
MILITANT BANNERS AND VISITS TO GRAVES OF MARTYRS CONTRASTED VIVIDLY
WITH OTHERWISE FESTIVE ATMOSPHERE, FAMILY PROMENADES AND POPPING
FIRECRACKERS OF THE ID A AFITR. ASAD FOCUSSED SPEECH ON SYRIAN

VIEW REGARDING FURTHER INTERIM NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL. NOTING
THAT ISRAEL AIMED AT ISOLATING AND FREEZING PALESTINIAN ISSUE,
ASAD PLEDGED THAT THIS STRATEGY WOULD NOT SUCCEED. "THE PALESTINIAN
QUESTION IS OUR QUESTION", HE STATED SEVERAL TIMES. "WE WILL NOT
HOLD ANY NEW TALKS ON DISENGAGEMENT OF FORCES UNLESS WE START
THESE TALKS ON THE SYRIAN AND PALESTINIAN FRONTS AT THE SAME TIME."
ASAD SPECIFICALLY DENIED THAT SYRIA MIGHT NEGOTIATE "ON WEST BANK OR
NEGOTIATE WITH JORDAN THROUGH THE EXISTING COOPERATIVE STRUCTURE
BETWEEN SYRIA AND JORDAN ON BEHALF OF THE PLO WITH RESPECT TO
THE PALESTINIAN FRONT." INSTEAD, HE EXPLICITLY ANNOUNCED THAT
"IF THERE ARE TO BE TALKS ON A NEW STEP ON THE SYRIAN FRONT,
THEY MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A SIMILAR NEW STEP ON THE PALESTINIAN
FRONT THROUGH THE PLO." ASAD CONCLUDED THIS PORTION OF HIS SPEECH

STRESSING "UNLESS THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE FIRST REALIZE THEIR
COMPLETE RIGHTS, LIFE IN REGION WILL NEVER BECOME STABLE. WAR IS

IN HANDS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND PEACE IS IN HANDS OF PALESTINIAN
PEOPLE."

3. ASAD THEN REMINDED AUDIENCE OF SYRIAN SACRIFICES DURING WAR,
OF DESTRUCTION OF ITS ECONOMY AND GREAT LOSSES SUFFERED BY SYRIAN
ARMY TO RELIEVE PRESSURE AGAINST EGYPTIAN FRONT AT SAME TIME SADAT
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TRYING TO ARRANGE CEASEFIRE. HE PRAISED EGYPTIAN PEOPLE AND ARMY
BUT DISPUTED SADAT'S MOTIVES IN FOCUSING ON MARGINAL QUESTIONS

SUCH AS CEASEFIRE MANEUVERS, SOVIET MENACE, CONFRONTATION WITH
AMERICANS, ETC. DISCUSSION OF THESE ISSUES, HE SAID, ONLY DISTRACTED
ARAB ATTENTION
FROM "REAL PROBLEM," WHICH IS CONTENT OF SINAI
AGREEMENT.

4. ASAD STATED THAT SYRIA DISAGREED WITH EGYPT ONLY ON SINAI AGREEMENT, AND LISTED SIX REASONS BEHIND OPPOSITION:

A. AGREEMENT CONSTITUTES DEVIATION FROM ARAB SOLIDARITY AND FROM RESOLUTIONS AGREED UPON AT VARIOUS ARAB SUMMITS.

B. AGREEMENT PERMITS PASSAGE OF ISRAELI CARGOES THROUGH CANAL WHILE NINETY PERCENT OF EGYPT STILL UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION.

"LET US ASK THE AMERICANS WHO ARRANGED THIS AGREEMENT WHETHER THEY WOULD PERMIT THE PASSAGE OF SOVIET GOODS THROUGH THEIR LANDS IF THE SOVIET UNION WAS OCCUPYING PART OF U.S. TERRITORY. THE REPLY WOULD NATURALLY BE NO."

C. AGREEMENT STIPULATES THAT SETTLEMENT CAN ONLY BE REACHED BY PEACEFUL MEANS, WHEREAS "ALL INTERNATIONAL CHARTERS AND TRADITIONS GIVE THE ONE WHOSE LAND IS OCCUPIED THE RIGHT TO USE ALL AVAILABLE MEANS TO LIBERATE HIS LAND."

D. AGREEMENT NOT VALID FOR LIMITED PERIOD ONLY, BUT WILL REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL REPLACED BY ANOTHER AGREEMENT.

E. AGREEMENT PLACES AMERICAN EXPERTS BETWEEN EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI FORCES AND EGYPT "HAS SURRENDERED THE RIGHT TO EVACUATE THEM" AT TIME OF ITS CHOOSING. THUS, "WE HAVE ADDED TO ISRAEL'S OCCUPATION OF OUR LAND ANOTHER OCCUPATION. THE U.S. IS NOT A NEUTRAL STATE."

F. AGREEMENT INCLUDES SECRET CLAUSES, WHOSE EXISTENCE AAS DENIED BY SADAT BUT REVEALED BY U.S. CONGRESS, WHICH EMBODY "GREAT DISASTER" FOR ARABS. ASAD R ETORICALLY ASKED WHY EGYPTIANS DENIED UNCLASSIFIED

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THEIR EXISTENCE TO "ENTIRE ARAB NATION," AND ASKED HOW EGYPTIANS COULD EVER AGREE TO CONTENTS OF SECRET DOCUMENTS.

5. COMMENT: ASAD'S OCTOBER 6 SPEECH IS MOST COMPREHENSIVE AND DEFINITIVE STATEMENT OF CURRENT SYRIAN POSITION ON SINAI AGREEMENT AND CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH INTERIM NEGOTIATING PROCESS WITH ISRAEL CAN PROCEED. WHEREAS BAATH PARTY NATIONAL COMMAND STATEMENT PUBLISHED SAME DAY (DAMASCUS 3891) FOCUSED ON NECESSITY OF TOPPLING SINAI AGREEMENT, ASAD STRESSED CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH SYRIA WOULD PERMIT MOMENTUM THUS FAR ACHIEVED IN SETTLEMENT PROCESS TO CONTINUE,

NAMELY, SIMULTANEOUS NEGOTIATIONS ON SYRIAN AND PALESTINIAN

FRONTS.

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